

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

Claim 1 (Currently Amended): A fixing device in an image forming apparatus, comprising:

a pressure belt that holds a recording medium by electrostatic force and carries the recording medium, the recording medium having a toner image on a surface that is not in contact with the pressure belt;

a fixing belt that fixes the toner image on the recording medium that is held by the pressure belt; and

a charging unit that applies an AC voltage to the pressure belt such that alternating regions of the pressure belt have alternate electric charges,

wherein the alternating regions alternate in a direction that the pressure belt advances.

Claim 2 (Original): The fixing device according to claim 1, further comprising:

a heating unit that heats the toner image on the recording medium while the fixing belt fixes the toner.

Claim 3 (Previously Presented): The fixing device according to claim 1, wherein the charging unit electrically charges the pressure belt before the recording medium makes a contact with the pressure belt.

Claim 4 (Previously Presented): The fixing device according to claim 1, wherein the charging unit electrically charges a surface of the pressure belt that makes a contact with the recording medium.

Claim 5 (Original): The fixing device according to claim 3, wherein the charging unit is an electric charger.

Claim 6 (Original): The fixing device according to claim 5, wherein the electric charger is in the form of a roller.

Claim 7 (Previously Presented): The fixing device according to claim 5, wherein the electric charger is in the form of a brush.

Claim 8 (Canceled).

Claim 9 (Original): The fixing device according to claim 3, wherein a surface of the pressure belt that is charged by the charging unit is provided with a coating of an electric non-conductive material.

Claim 10 (Previously Presented): The fixing device according to claim 1, further comprising a neutralizing unit that neutralizes the electric charges on the pressure belt and the recording medium after the toner image has been fixed to the recording medium.

Claim 11 (Previously Presented): The fixing device according to claim 10, wherein the neutralizing unit is a neutralizing charger that applies an alternating voltage to the recording medium to neutralize the electric charges.

Claim 12 (Original): The fixing device according to claim 10, wherein the neutralizing unit is in the form of a brush.

Claim 13 (Original): The fixing device according to claim 1, wherein the pressure belt is configured to extend longer than the fixing belt in a direction of dispatch of the recording medium.

Claim 14 (Original): The fixing device according to claim 13, wherein the pressure belt tightly holds the recording medium.

Claim 15 (Original): The fixing device according to claim 1, wherein the fixing belt makes a contact with the toner image on the recording medium and the pressure belt does not make a contact with the toner image on the recording medium.

Claim 16 (Previously Presented): The fixing device according to claim 1, wherein the pressure belt is an endless belt and is rotatably suspended over a plurality of rollers.

Claim 17 (Previously Presented): The fixing device according to claim 1, wherein the fixing belt is an endless belt and is rotatably suspended over a plurality of rollers.

Claim 18 (Currently Amended): An image forming apparatus comprising a fixing device, the fixing device including,

a pressure belt that holds a recording medium by electrostatic force and carries the recording medium, the recording medium having a toner image on a surface that is not in contact with the endless pressure belt;

a fixing belt that fixes the toner image on the recording medium that is held by the pressure belt; and

a charging unit that applies an AC voltage to the pressure belt such that alternating regions of the pressure belt have alternate electric charges.

wherein the alternating regions alternate in a direction that the pressure belt advances.

Claim 19 (Previously Presented): An image forming apparatus comprising a fixing device, the fixing device including,

a pressure belt that holds a recording medium by electrostatic force and carries the recording medium, the recording medium having a toner image on a surface that is not in contact with the pressure belt;

a fixing belt that fixes the toner image on the recording medium that is held by the pressure belt; and

a neutralizing unit that neutralizes electric charges on the pressure belt and the recording medium after the toner image has been fixed to the recording medium,

wherein the neutralizing unit is a neutralizing charger that applies an alternating voltage to the recording medium to neutralize the electric charges.

Claim 20 (Previously Presented): A fixing device in an image forming apparatus, comprising:

a pressure belt that holds a recording medium by electrostatic force and carries the recording medium, the recording medium having a toner image on a surface that is not in contact with the pressure belt; and

a fixing belt that fixes the toner image on the recording medium that is held by the pressure belt, and the pressure belt is configured to extend longer than the fixing belt in a direction of dispatch of the recording medium.

Claim 21 (Previously Presented): An image forming apparatus comprising a fixing device, the fixing device including,

a pressure belt that holds a recording medium by electrostatic force and carries the recording medium, the recording medium having a toner image on a surface that is not in contact with the pressure belt; and

a fixing belt that fixes the toner image on the recording medium that is held by the pressure belt, and the pressure belt is configured to extend longer than the fixing belt in a direction of dispatch of the recording medium.